

Safe and Responsible Siting of Public Schools in RI

Maintain Current Law! Oppose H5617 and S520

School siting in Rhode Island

-In 2012, Environmental Cleanup Objectives for Schools – aka “**the School Siting bill**” – passed both the Senate and House unanimously. The bill was signed into law by Governor Chafee in June 2012. The law:

1) **Prohibits school construction on contaminated sites where there is ongoing potential for vapor intrusion.** Vapor intrusion occurs when toxic substances dumped in the ground or groundwater evaporate into a gas and can travel into buildings through tiny cracks or holes in the foundation.

2) **Requires municipalities to create & oversee a public process**—including creating a written report, hosting a public meeting, and addressing public comments—when a school is proposed to be built on any other type of contaminated site.



This year, the law is being challenged by the Rhode Island Mayoral Academies (RIMA).

RIMA supports the establishment of Mayoral Academy charter schools in the state and is looking to **expand one of the schools** in its network to a site that may have **vapor intrusion concerns**. RIMA has worked with RI legislators to craft a new school siting bill that would **gut current law and put more kids in our state at risk** of toxic exposure.



How RIMA’s Bill Would Undermine Current Law

1) **Allows school construction on vapor intrusion sites** using expensive and unreliable engineered remedies

2) **Does not require schools/municipalities to set aside funds** for repairs to failed engineered systems

3) **Does not require any assurance for long-term maintenance** or monitoring of these remedies.

4) **Makes a legislative finding that “from time to time” it is necessary to site schools on contaminated sites.**